

bringing large numbers of consumers to the towns' stores and industries. More importantly, they aided the communities in times of crisis, searching for missing persons, fighting fires, and offering assistance to residents during snow and ice storms.

Today, the legacy of the Civilian Conservation Corps lives on in the New Mexico Youth Conservation Corps Act, which was adopted by the state Legislature in 1992. YCC provides employment for young people in projects that conserve the state's natural resources. The YCC provides a \$1,000 tuition voucher as additional compensation for those who serve. The voucher may be used at any institution of higher education in the state of New Mexico.

Besides offering the members an opportunity to work, the Civilian Conservation Corps provided long-lasting friendships and ties that have endured over the seventy years since the Corps' inception. This sense of loyalty and pride extended to an unquestionable sense of pride for our country that is almost unparalleled. The work of the Civilian Conservation Corps remains as a monument to the young men who dedicated their lives to mending and preserving our natural resources. These men have earned the respect and honor of our nation. I offer my heartfelt thanks to the members of the Civilian Conservation Corps and congratulations on their seventieth anniversary.

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF TIMOTHY T. WILLIAMS

HON. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 31, 2003

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the contributions of Timothy T. Williams, a resident of my district who has worked tirelessly for Baltimore's homeless citizens.

For the past 12 years, Mr. Williams has demonstrated outstanding service as Executive Director of the South Baltimore Homeless Shelter, where he led the development of a therapeutic community for homeless men with substance abuse problems, and skillfully managed comprehensive emergency services for homeless women and children. He has designed a community recovery model, through which graduates of the South Baltimore transitional shelter services provide counseling to homeless residents at South Baltimore Station and affiliated agencies, such as Carrington House.

Mr. Williams will now expand his work in the continuum of care for Baltimore's homeless and addicted by joining Jobs, Housing and Recovery, Inc., where he will develop supportive housing facilities and vocational services as the next step to recovery for Baltimore residents transitioning out of homelessness.

Mr. Williams received a bachelor's degree from Wheeling Jesuit University and a Juris Doctor from the University of Baltimore School of Law. Mr. Williams also served as a VISTA volunteer in Texas, where he provided legal aid services to the rural poor.

I commend and thank Timothy Williams for his outstanding contributions to Baltimore and its citizens, and I wish him continued success in all future endeavors.

CLARIFYING THE ENFORCEMENT PROVISIONS OF THE HATCH ACT

HON. TOM DAVIS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 31, 2003

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce a bill on behalf of myself as chairman of the Committee on Government Reform and Representative FRANK WOLF. This legislation will clarify the intent of Congress regarding the enforcement of the Hatch Act.

The Hatch Act is a critical component of the system of laws designed to maintain the public's confidence in the professionalism of our nation's civil servants. The Act proscribes the types of political activity covered civil servants may engage in. The Act is intended to protect civil servants from political coercion by politically appointed supervisors. It is also intended to assure the impartial administration of Federal laws.

Since 1993 the general posture of the Hatch Act has been permissive, allowing civil servants wide latitude to be involved in non-partisan political activities in their communities. Federal employees are restricted from using their official authority to interfere in an election, and from soliciting or receiving political campaign contributions as well as several other activities relating to the use of their public authority for partisan effect. Covered employees also may not run for elective office in most partisan elections. The Act states that the penalty for violating the Act is a 30-day suspension without pay or, for egregious violations, termination from the civil service.

The Hatch Act is investigated and prosecuted by the United States Office of Special

Counsel (OSC). This office is primarily charged with protecting civil servants from prohibited personnel practices, especially reprisal for whistleblowing activities. The OSC also investigates and prosecutes, when appropriate, violations of the Hatch Act.

Unfortunately, recent activities of the OSC have raised questions about the Office's interpretation of their prerogatives under the Hatch Act. Specifically, the OSC is attempting to prosecute an individual who is no longer an employee of the Federal government for an alleged Hatch Act violation. This action is clearly outside of the authority Congress granted under the 1993 Amendments to the Hatch Act since the only penalties are suspension or termination.

The bill accomplishes two goals.

First, it clarifies that a Federal employee who voluntarily separates from the civil service may not be penalized under the provisions of the Hatch Act. The bill also states that if that person rejoins the federal service the OSC may reopen that investigation should they so choose.

Second, this bill strikes two regulations promulgated by the OSC as routine use exceptions to the Privacy Act. These two exceptions allow the OSC to release private information for almost any reason as long as the records are used to defend the Office of the Special Counsel. The Privacy Act describes a routine use under 5 U.S.C. § 552a (7) as "the use of such record for a purpose which is compatible with the purpose with which it is collected." Since the OSC does not collect and develop its investigation files for the purpose of defending its reputation, these regulations are clearly inappropriate.

54,000 federal employees live in my district. These women and men provide much of the talent and energy that makes the local community work. In 1993, Congress amended the Hatch Act to create a very simple standard for behavior with very limited proscriptions for political behavior. The hope was to create an environment where these citizens would feel free to fully express themselves in the non-partisan political arena.

The zealous prosecution by the OSC is beginning to erode this framework of limited proscriptions. At a time when fewer and fewer people bother to participate in local government the Congress should re-affirm its commitment to local communities and to its own employees by reinforcing the limited, permissive character of the Hatch Act.